

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 6099

EXDIS

DEPT PLEASE PASS DIA

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ENRG PFOR IS EG
SUBJ: ISRAELI ACTION IN GULF OF SUEZ

REF: TEL AVIV 6097

1. DATT AND ARMA MET WITH IDF CHIEF OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS, HIS
DEPUTY AND CHIEF OF NAVAL INTELLIGENCE AT 1545-1610 HOURS SEPT 4.
THEY REPORTED FOLLOWING.

2. EARLIER ON SEPT 4 THERE WERE SOME INDICATIONS OF ACTIVITY AT
SAFAGA WHICH WERE EVALUATED AS PREPARATIONS TO LEAVE PORT. IF
INDEED ANOTHER EGYPTIAN SHIP DID LEAVE AND WAS ENROUTE TO MARINER
IT WOULD HAVE BEEN PICKED UP ON RADAR SOME TIME AGO;
HOWEVER, NO SUCH SHIP HAS YET BEEN NOTED. ISRAELI NAVY (IN)
STATED THAT NO ADDITIONAL EGYPTIAN SHIPS, INCLUDING TWO ROCKET
LAUNCHERS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, HAD ARRIVED IN AREA AT TIME
OF BRIEFING. THE TWO EGYPTIAN SHIPS WHICH WERE INVOLVED IN INCIDENT
EARLIER IN THE DAY REMAIN IN THE VICINITY OF THE MARINER.
IT WAS NOTED THAT RAS SHUKAIR, WHERE MARINER IS CURRENTLY
ANCHORED, IS VERY POOR ANCHORAGE EVEN IN MODERATE WEATHER.

3. CHIEF OF NAVAL INTELLIGENCE FIRMLY STATED THAT NO ISRAELI
VESSEL OF ANY KIND HAD FIRED ANY SHOTS. EGYPTIAN FIRE WAS AGAIN
DESCRIBED AS BEING QUOTE IN THE AIR. UNQUOTE. IT IS OBVIOUS TO
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US THAT IN IS TREATING FIRING IN LOW KEY.

4. IN BOATS REMAIN IN GULF OUTSIDE OF AT TUR ANCHORAGE. THERE HAS BEEN NO CONTACT OTHER THAN RADAR SINCE MORNING INCIDENT.

5. THERE HAS BEEN NO AIR ACTIVITY, EITHER ISRAELI OR EGYPTIAN, OVER THE SEA AREA IN QUESTION. SEOM IDF LIGHT TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT WERE IN THE AREA, OVER LAND, EARLIER IN THE DAY. THERE WERE TWO SORTIES OF CIVILIAN HELICOPTERS ON THE EGYPTIAN SIDE WHICH ARE CONNECTED TO MARINER ACTIVITIES.

6. DABUR CAPTAIN WHO HAD DIRECT CONTACT WITH MARINER IS STILL AT SEA. IN DOES NOT HAVE SECURE COMMO TO DABUR AND THUS DEBRIEF MUST AWAIT ITS RETURN TO AT TUR.

7. IN NOTES THAT APPROACH OF MARINER TO 304.1 WAS NOT NORMAL DIRECT ROUTE. APPEARED TO BE A WELL COORDINATED MOVE IN CONJUNCTION WITH EGYPTIAN WARSHIPS ADN IN WAS SURPRISED TO FIND MARINER IN POSITION AT 304.1. NOTED THAT EGYPTIAN CRAFT DID NOT HAVE RADAR ON FOR CONSIDERABLE PERIOD OF THE TIME WHICH IS UNUSUAL AND INDICATES DELIBERATE AND WELL EXECUTED PLANNING. BECAUSE OF THIS APPROACH IN WAS NOT INITIALLY SURE TO WHAT LENGTHS EGYPTIANS WERE PREPARED TO GO AS CONCERNS THE INCIDENT. HOWEVER, APPEARS TO IN THAT NEITHER NAVY DESIRES A CONFRONTATION.

8. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE CHIEF OF NAVAL INTELLIGENCE,WHO HAS BEEN AT HIS POST SINCE 0100 SEPT 4, HAS EVALUATED SITUATION AS BEING QUIET ENOUGH FOR HIM TO GO HOME FOR WHAT REMAINS OF THE SABBATH, HOWEVER, AT 1925, CHIEF OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS WAS LOCATED IN OFFICE OF DIRECTOR OF MILITARY INTELLIGENCE. AT THIAIT TIME, IDF STATED THERE WAS NO CHANGE TO SITUATION AS DESCRIBED ABOVE. HE ASSURED THAT THEY WOULD ADVISE US IF THERE IS ANY CHANGE. HE ALSO SAID THAT HE NOW HAS CONFIRMED FROM DABUR CAPTAIN WHAT HE TOLD MARINR THIS MORNING. THIS WAS: "YOU ARE IN WATERS UNDER ISRAELI CONTROL. YOU ARE REQUESTED TO LEAVE THIS PLACE".

9. RE STATE 220189, WE ARE ASKING FOR IMMEDIATE MEETING WITH IDF INTELLIGENCE TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT FIRING REPORTED PARAS ONE AND TWO.

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